



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Headquarters

**Information Paper**

27 January 1998

**SUBJECT: Military Specifications and Standards (MIL-SPECS and MIL-STDS)  
Acquisition Reform**

**BACKGROUND.**

a. On 29 June 1994, the Secretary of Defense directed the Secretaries of the Military Departments to implement "Blueprint for Change," an April 1994 report by the DoD Process Action Team on Military Specifications and Standards. The primary emphasis of this direction is to decrease reliance on the subject specifications and standards used in the acquisition process, "unless no practical alternative exists to meet the user's needs." This is to be done by giving first preference to the use of performance specifications, followed with the use non-government standards and, as a last resort (with appropriate waivers), the use of MIL-SPECS and MIL-STDS.

b. By memorandum dated 2 December 1994, subject: Military Specifications and Standards Acquisition Reform, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Research, Development, and Acquisition) requested the immediate implementation of the "Army Implementation Plan" (AIP) dated 23 November 1994. The AIP provides operational direction and policies for accomplishing the DoD acquisition initiative. The Chief of AMCRDA-T, currently Mr. Dale G. Adams, has since been designated the overall Standards Improvement Executive for the Army as the liaison authority between Army contracting agencies and the DoD Standardization Program Executive, currently Mr. Andrew D. Certo, ODUSD(IA&I)AP.

c. On 16 February 1995, the USACE CG issued a Master Action Plan (MAP) to all MSC indicating how the Corps will phase-out MIL-SPECS and MIL-STDS in compliance with AIP requirements. The MAP was also forwarded to SARD-ZP in accordance with the AIP and was approved by memorandum dated 31 July 1995. The MAP requires that all USACE solicitations issued after 30 September 1995 either be free of MIL-SPECS and MIL-STDS or have waivers in place for those MIL-SPECS and MIL-STDS used. Specific requirements for waivers are outlined in the MAP.

**DISCUSSION.**

a. Predating (but consistent with) the MAP, CEMP-E began an ongoing program in October 1994 to replace MIL/FED-SPECS/STDS used in the Corps of Engineer Guide Specifications (CEGS) with industry consensus non-government standards and specifications, e.g., those issued by ASTM, ANSI, etc. MIL/FED-SPECS/STDS are sometimes referenced in the CEGS to define requirements for materials, equipment, systems, and methods used in the construction of Military and Civil Works facilities. Contract

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specifications for these facilities are based on the requirements in the CEGS. To date, 120 MIL-SPECS/STDS and 147 FED-SPECS/STDS have been removed from the CEGS from initial totals of 137 and 168, respectively. Ongoing efforts to eliminate the remaining MIL/FED-SPECS/STDS from the CEGS will involve the development of government performance documents to replace the DoD-targeted documents, followed by long-term coordination with industry standards-setting organizations to publish standards and specifications to replace the government documents.

b. In accordance with provisions in the AIP and the MAP, MIL/FED-SPECS/STDS remaining in the CEGS have been exempted from the waiver process by the USACE Standards Executive, Mr. Kisuk Cheung, Chief, CEMP-E. Consequently, these MIL/FED-SPECS/STDS are approved for use in USACE solicitations and contracts without additional local waivers. A current list of USACE-exempted MIL/FED-SPECS/STDS is maintained on-line at <http://www.hnd.usace.army.mil/techinfo/misc/waivers.html>.

c. MIL/FED-SPECS/STDS (not included in the CEGS) that are added to project solicitation packages to meet local requirements must be reviewed, approved, and waived by USACE District Chiefs of Engineering. In accordance with the MAP, and pending notification that they are no longer required, quarterly reports of USACE waiver approvals must be forwarded through contracting channels to CEPR-O for consolidation and transmittal to AMC.

d. Since the release of the MAP, a function previously under AMC was transferred to our Topographic Engineering Center (CETEC) which resulted in the assignment of 94 MIL-SPECS to USACE. These specifications must either be canceled or converted to performance documents. As currently reflected in the DoD Acquisition Streamlining and Standardization Information System (ASSIST) Database, 67 of these MIL-SPECS have been canceled and 17 have been converted to performance-based CIDS or MIL-PRFS, as scheduled. CETEC will convert the remaining 10 MIL-SPECS to performance documents by the end of FY98 in accordance with an approved milestone plan.

e. To accomplish the above acquisition reform actions, USACE has been funded by AMC through the Army Standardization Program budget. To date, we have received \$500K in FY96, \$250K in FY97, and \$350K for FY98 efforts. As DoD requires that all AIP MIL-SPEC Reform initiatives be completed by the end of FY98, AMC advises to expect minimal-to-no funding after this FY. While CETEC actions are scheduled to meet this requirement, MIL/FED-SPECS/STDS may continue to be used in USACE solicitations and contracts beyond FY98, pending cancellation of the references or the identification or development of suitable replacement documents. This is consistent with reform goals to avoid adverse increases in the cost of doing business while implementing policy requirements.

**POINT OF CONTACT.** The Military Programs POC is Mr. Rick Dahnke, CEMP-ET, telephone (202) 761-1203.